Meridian Trust

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Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to invite applications from September's Year 9 pupils to join our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme for the 2025 season. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is the world's leading youth achievement award, which is highly valued by employers and further education establishments.

The Bronze Award is a tough challenge involving four sections:

Volunteering, Physical and Skills Sections

For these three sections participants will be expected to organise their own activity, making sure they can get there and have all the equipment they need. We are here to help and will do all we can to make each of the sections an enjoyable and rewarding part of the Bronze Award. Participants must commit to one of these sections for at least six months, and the other two sections for at least three months. Each should involve, on average, an hour's activity every week.

Expedition Section

We will complete this section together by undertaking a walking expedition. Participants must:

Complete the training Day: **Sunday 26th April** from **9am – 5pm at Ely College** under the supervision of Azarias. The Training Day will provide in-the-field training, with participants expected to demonstrate the ability to work successfully as a team. We will cover all aspects of DofE skills including Navigation, Route Planning, Campcraft Skills, Cooking in the Outdoors and First Aid. For the cooking in the outdoors we will ask that students bring the food they would cook on expedition for their lunch. Complete an assessed weekend:

We will take groups out for their qualifying expedition in the summer term of Year 9, over the **weekend of 5th -6th June 2025**. Participants will complete their expedition under the remote supervision of qualified outdoor instructors, College staff and DofE Expedition Assessors from Azarias.

The bronze expedition is a two day and one night expedition that takes place near Grafham Water in Cambridgeshire. The expedition will require participants to navigate a pre-planned route across the Cambridgeshire countryside to our camping field in Stow Longa.

Transport

Private car drop off by parents

- Students will require dropping off in Riseley (Bedfordshire) by parents for a 9.30am start.
- Collection will be from Grafham Village Hall (Cambridgeshire) on Sunday 6th June at 3pm.

If you have any further enquiries about the expedition element, then please do not hesitate to contact Azarias Training Ltd at dofe@azarias.co.uk

Ofsted Good Provider

Quality Centre of Excellence voice 21 2024

Silver LOtC Mark

Arts Council England

Artsmark Silver Award Awarded by Arts Council England

Music Mark Proud to be a Music Mark School

Gold School Mental Health Award

Commitment
Completion of the Bronze Award requires a high level of commitment. Participants will need to set up and take part in three activities each week to achieve the Volunteering, Physical and Skills sections. Plans for each of these should be submitted before the end of the summer term, and participants should have started all of their activities before the expeditions in the autumn term. Please note that participants should be able to commit to the **training** and **qualifying weekend expeditions** listed above if they are to enrol. The terms and conditions of the Ely College Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme are detailed below.

Participation Cost
The total cost of participation on Ely College's Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award is **£200**. This fee covers the official Duke of Edinburgh's Award materials, administrative fees and all the training/expedition costs incurred by the College, which comprises payment of qualified outdoor instructors and expedition assessors; campsite fees and loan of group equipment but excludes the food participants take for consumption whilst on the expeditions. If your child joins the scheme, payment will be due via MCAS which will open in **early September**:

1. **Enrolment fee of £50 by Friday 3rd October 2025:** This will confirm a place for your child on Ely College's Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

2. **First expedition payment of £75 by Friday 7th November 2025**: This will confirm a place for your child on the training weekend.

3. **Final expedition payment of £75 by Friday 2nd January 2026**: This will confirm a place for your child on the qualifying expedition.

Some financial support is available for applicants who qualify now, or have qualified in the past six years, for free school meals. Please contact Dr KJ Norton-Berry, Assistant Principal and Pupil Premium Coordinator (knorton-berry@elycollege.co.uk) for further details.

Application Process
To confirm a place for your child on Ely College's Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award, please pay the £50 enrolment fee via WisePay and complete the DofE enrolment form (see attached: if you require a paper copy, please request from College Reception) for return to College Reception by the application deadline of Friday 3rd October 2025. Please note, participants must have their parent/carer's permission to enrol on the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award and their commitment to pay the full cost of participation.

Clothing and Equipment Participants must provide their own clothes, including hiking boots, their own rucksack for the expeditions. All other expedition specific equipment (tents, stoves, fuel and maps) will be issued to groups prior to expedition and returned on completion.

Thank you for considering applying for a place for your child on our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme. A copy of the DofE leaflet: *A useful guide for parents, guardians and carers* is attached, but if you have any specific questions, please do get in touch via email at jwaters@elycollege.co.uk; hhennessey@elycollege.co.uk or visit www.dofe.org/do/, which contains further information about the Award, together with ideas for completing each section.

Yours faithfully

Mr J Waters

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Leader

Terms and conditions of the Ely College Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of all information provided, but some details may be subject to change. Where this is the case, parents/carers will be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Payments must be paid in full, no later than the deadlines as outlined in the application letter or in any subsequent confirmation letter. The preferred method of payment is via WisePay.

The College reserves the right to withdraw any participant from training for the expedition section of the Award at any time.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that all contact and medical details provided on forms are correct and that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Manager is alerted immediately to any changes in circumstance or any issues that may have a bearing on the participant's behaviour and/or well-being over the course of the expeditions.

The College's expectations around standards of behaviour apply at all times during training and whilst away on the expeditions. Expedition leaders reserve the right to sanction participants in line with College policy both during the expeditions and on return to College.

If the behaviour of a participant is such that the expedition leader deems it necessary to remove them from the expedition, parents/carers will be expected to help facilitate their removal and will be liable for any additional costs incurred in the process.